

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

- 1-18. (canceled)
19. (currently amended) A negative electrode, comprising:
- a) a lithium material; and
 - b) a film coating said lithium material, said film formed by treating said lithium material with an oxidizing agent comprising a compound selected from the group consisting of an interhalogen, an oxychloride and combinations thereof prior to incorporation of said electrode into a battery cell.
20. (currently amended) The negative electrode of claim 19, wherein the oxidizing agent is ~~at least one of sulfur dioxide, nitrous oxide, carbon dioxide, a halogen, an interhalogen, an oxychloride, a sulfur monochloride, a vinyl carbonate and halogenated carbonates.~~
21. (currently amended) The negative electrode of claim 19, wherein the oxidizing agent is an oxychloride ~~20, wherein the halogen is selected from the group consisting of Cl₂, Br₂ and I₂.~~
22. (currently amended) The negative electrode of claim 21 ~~claim 20~~, wherein the oxychloride is selected from the group consisting of SO₂Cl₂ and SOCl₂.

23. (currently amended) The negative electrode of claim 20, wherein the interhalogen is selected from the group consisting of iodine monochloride (ICl), iodine trichloride (ICl₃) and iodine monobromide (I₂Br₂) ~~I₂Br₂~~.

24. (original) The electrode of claim 19, wherein said lithium material is comprised of at least one of lithium metal, a lithium alloy, and a lithium insertion compound.

25-47. (canceled)